

2.8 inches of rain in the recent storm has damaged roads and trails, but may very well extend the blooming season by allowing plants to continue to grow larger.

Heading east on S-22, look for early blooms along the roadside and in the washes & canyons between mile 33 and 35. There is a large pullout between miles 30 and 31 with room for parking near a field of purple sand verbena.

Just west of mile marker 35, park and walk into Arroyo Salado, Coachwhip Canyon, or Ella Wash for a wide variety of flowers, including sand verbena, desert sunflower, brown-eyed evening primrose, and lupine. These flowers are blooming in response to fall storms in this area, and may be nearing their peak. There are Desert lilies in bloom in Arroyo Salado primitive camp, with many more in bud.

CAUTION: Dirt roads into the Borrego Badlands require four-wheel-drive!

Check out the mouth of Coyote Canyon at the end of DiGiorgio Road, north of Borrego Springs. The Lower Coyote Canyon road is CLOSED to all traffic due to flooding from recent rains, but flower-seekers may park at the end of the pavement and then walk a short distance along the private road that heads EAST, to a field with desert sunflowers, lupine, sand verbena, brown-eyed evening primrose, dune primrose, and desert lilies.

In the southern part of the Park, June Wash has flowers. Park near mile marker 42 on Highway S-2, and walk up the wash.

For maps and directions, call the Visitor Center at 760-767-4205.

For guided flower walks on Fridays, reserve your spot with the Anza-Borrego Foundation at 760-767-0446.

Ocotillo Wells SVRA is also experiencing an early bloom due to heavy rain in the fall. Visitors with 4WD can check out The Cove, Devil's Slide, Palm Wash, and Tarantula Wash. Those without 4WD vehicles should visit the OWSVRA Discovery Center (near mile marker 91 on Highway 78), and walk the accessible trail to see a variety of things in bloom. Their staff is offering free wildflower tours at the Discovery Center on February 23rd and 24th. 760-767-5393.